ansd JH Private

Cambridge Nov. 21. 1867

My dear Henry

It seems a sad pity to put a pruning knife ~~to~~ to your elaborate and well-proportioned Eulogy, and to interfere in any respect with its fair form. But, consider —

1. That its length, even after moderate verbal condensing, will exceed that of all the rest of the biographies of the year put together. Making as it does — you know — a part of the annual report of the Council (all of which is supposed to be read at one meeting), it must have a certain proportion, both in the fitness of things, and

a sort of ex[illegible] 2 or 3 pages said ~~will~~ would, I reckon, make 15 pages of our Proceedings

Ever Yours cordially & gratefully

A Gray

Asa Gray
Nov 21st 67

and in justice to the rest.

2. Then the fact that it is the Council loquitur, requires the omission of the first person singular, which comes in towards the close, and restrains somewhat the freedom and the particularity so natural & fitting to one writing of his intimate friend.

Now, what shall I do? I have read over the mss., and like it much, —too much to want to spoil it. I think you ought & will have a call to use it in full in connexion with the Smithsonian, —when you must needs be Bache's biographer, and will want to print in your Smithsonian Report. Will you let me take by condensation & much omission & re-elaboration — the, say 6, printed 8vo pages (as much as we gave to Everett & Quincy together)? Would that spoil the Eulogy for the use you ought hereafter put it to?

I hope not. And — unless you forbid I shall set down to it with a stern Procrustean resolve. It seems like amputation!

If you object to that, I could, out of your material, make out, in my ~~usual~~ own language, an abstract,